

## **AB 599 Public Advisory Committee**

Cal/EPA Building  
1001 I Street, Sierra Hearing Room, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Sacramento, California

### *Meeting Summary*

Wednesday, February 27, 2002

#### **Convene Meeting**

Angela Schroeter of the SWRCB opened the meeting at 9:30 a.m.

#### **Welcome**

Pete Silva, Member of the SWRCB, and Theo Cline, staff to Assembly Member Carol Liu, welcomed the Public Advisory Committee (PAC) members to their first meeting and wished them success.

Steve Ekstrom, PAC facilitator, also welcomed members and reviewed the day's agenda.

#### **Introductions**

PAC members, Interagency Task Force (ITF) members, SWRCB staff and members of the public introduced themselves.

#### **Orientation to AB 599 and the Role of the PAC**

Angela Schroeter described the roles of the PAC and the ITF as defined in AB 599. In summary, the ITF, comprised of representatives from SWRCB, DWR, DHS, DPR, CDFA and DTSC, is responsible for submitting a multi-agency report to the Governor and Legislature by March, 2003 that identifies actions necessary to establish a comprehensive groundwater monitoring program. The PAC, comprised of representatives from federal agencies, public water systems, local water agencies, groundwater management entities, environmental organizations, business community and agriculture, is formed to advise the ITF in developing its recommendations.

The PAC will meet 6 times in the next year. ITF meetings will be held the day after PAC meetings.

#### **Current Groundwater Monitoring Activities**

James Giannopolous of the SWRCB presented an overview of current groundwater monitoring activities at the SWRCB. The central question is, "Are Surface Contaminants Reaching Deeper Groundwater (The Groundwater We Drink)?" Included in his presentation was a demonstration of how GeoTracker works and an overview of MCL exceedences in the approximately 1197 public drinking water wells that are abandoned, destroyed or inactive status in California.

Members of the ITF presented overviews of their agency's current groundwater-related activities. These included DHS (Gary Yamamoto), DWR (Carl Hauge), DTSC (Dan Gallagher), DFA (Al Vargas), and DPR (John Troiano).

Following these presentations PAC members made several points:

- It's important to focus on salinity
- Are domestic wells being considered?
- Regarding databases:
  - It's important to link the databases of the various participating agencies. There may be funding sources available to support combining databases.
  - GeoTracker could be the foundation for such a linked database.
  - A presentation on databases to the PAC could be useful – could the ITF assess the feasibility of combining databases and report back to the PAC?
  - Should we look at what other states are doing? (the response was that Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory did a search related to Geotracker and found minimal information).
  - Standards for database formats are important, as is standardized data collection methods.

### **Approaches to a Comprehensive Groundwater Monitoring Plan**

Neil Dubrovsky of the U.S. Geological Survey described different levels of approaches that could be taken to developing a comprehensive groundwater monitoring program. The first and most detailed approach (dense number of monitoring points) is a statewide approach where monitoring points are located using a grid network and all constituents are monitored at all monitoring points. The second approach would be to rely predominantly on existing groundwater data, locate additional monitoring points as necessary in priority areas only, and monitor for all constituents. The third approach (least detailed level) would be to take sub-samples of existing monitoring points (approximately 10-15%), supplement in priority areas, and monitor selected constituents. In all cases the hydrological unit is the basic building block.

PAC members made several points:

- Provide more context; we need to take the time to scope the details before we can advise.
- The ITF should provide the PAC with a few proposals based on different levels of required funding; look at other states for ideas.
- Tell us what agencies currently involved in monitoring are spending and how many people years each has; and what is their original charge or mandate?
- Can we get a vulnerability analysis?
- The PAC should advise on levels of certainty/uncertainty.
- What's the end product? Perhaps we should outline that first (for reference, see page 5 of handout on the orientation to AB 599).
- Define the existing programs and the gaps, and the cost to address those gaps.
- Define terms so we have a common understanding, e.g., what does "assessing" mean?
- What does "all constituents" mean?

- Look at what's currently being monitored well, what's not being monitored well, and what's not being monitored at all.
- The ITF should describe the best possible program, then describe how existing data and activities fit in.
- We should define the level of risk we're willing to accept.
- Identify the common elements of a good assessment program and the tools needed to implement it.
- Most monitoring is regulatory driven; we should shift to one that's resource management driven.

Summary of the discussion:

- At this point, the ITF should not be constrained by costs.
- Identify what the "ideal" comprehensive groundwater monitoring program is and articulate the criteria for it.
- Then, identify the existing gaps.

## **PAC Governance**

The following decisions were reached by consensus:

- Leadership: Bill Mills will serve as the PAC's Chair; David Beckman will be the Vice Chair.
- Agenda development: staff will submit a draft agenda to Bill (Chair), who will in turn forward it to PAC members asking for their input. Bill will forward any changes to the draft agenda to staff.
- Agendas and support materials will be emailed to PAC members two to four weeks prior to each meeting.
- Decision-making process: consensus is the preferred method. However, there may be occasions where simple input to the ITF without consensus will suffice. In some cases, voting may be necessary. A quorum of 7 will be necessary for any voting; and a simple majority of those present will determine if a motion passes.
- There will be no alternate PAC members.
- If a member is going to miss a meeting, s/he may submit their thoughts on a particular agenda item to the Chair in advance.
- Meeting conduct/groundrules:
  - Start on time, end on time.
  - One speaker at a time; allow people to finish; don't interrupt.
  - Be concise.
  - Keep sidebar conversations to a minimum.
  - Stay focused on the topic ... not the person.
  - Be real, but in a respectful way.
  - Listen for understanding; appreciate other points of view; try on other ideas; seek common ground.
  - Seek clarification of other's perspectives ... ask questions

- Public comment: provide two opportunities, before the lunch break and before the meeting is adjourned.

### **Next steps**

- The next meeting will be held April 9<sup>th</sup> in Sacramento. Specific location to be determined.
- Other suggested meeting dates are:
  - April 29, 2002
  - June 19, 2002
  - August 28, 2002
  - October 23, 2002
  - December 18, 2002
  - February 19, 2003

PAC members will be contacted to see if these dates are acceptable.

### **Meeting Evaluation**

Suggested meeting improvements were:

- Improve the sound so microphones aren't needed.
- Transcribe PAC members comments during discussions on flip charts.
- PAC Members should be more focused; it's not necessary to repeat what's already been said or established.
- Create a "parking list" for items that are off-topic but important to address at an appropriate time in the future.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 4:00 p.m.